

DISSENTS—KENTUCKY. One of the most interesting and important questions in this war is the question of dissent.

The public in general have probably no conception of the extent to which this civil war is going.

In one of the middle States, we forget which, 4,000 men were drafted and mustered into service, and shortly afterwards, not more than one or two hundred of them were to be found, all the rest having deserted and returned, not to the Army of the Potomac, the rate of desertions for months has been enormous, nothing but skeletons of many of the regiments remaining.

In one of the regiments, now at Falmouth with but three hundred rank and file, the Colonel recently went into an examination of the whereabouts of his missing men. He had originally one thousand, and he discovered that eight hundred and seventy-seven had been killed, and the rest were all deserters. Gen. Halleck has from time to time issued strong orders upon the subject, giving notice that every deserter and every absentee without leave should invariably be punished with the utmost rigour of military law, but the orders have been the beginning and the end.

Gen. Halleck has issued orders, and measures to secure the return and punishment of delinquents, and we trust that something may reasonably be expected from his well-known energy, determination, and strength of purpose.

Lithero, multitudinous as the desertions have been, only two executions for that crime, according to the Army and Navy Chronicle, have taken place since the commencement of the rebellion. Such facts seem almost to transcend belief, but we have no doubt that it is a fact.

And how is it with the Kentucky troops in respect to desertion and absenteeism without leave? We are ashamed to tell. This State furnished for the Union army upwards of forty thousand soldiers, men who volunteered, swore to render faithful obedience to their officers, and took the oath of loyalty to the Government.

What would the Kentucky people like to know where a large portion of those who survive in health, now are. Their gallant comrades in the field would certainly like to know. It is true that the soldiers of Kentucky have had peculiarly great facilities for desertion as her soil has been the theatre of war and they have been repeatedly marched and counter-marched in sight of almost every fort and army here, but this is no excuse for the crime or any palliation of it. If they could see their homes from the ranks of the brave and noble defenders of those homes, the sight should have served their hearts to subvert and endure all in the common cause, and nerved their arms to strike till the last invader should fall, instead of leaving the last invader to run away from the great and arduous and glorious work, upon which of their own accord they had entered.

We have much to say upon this subject, but we shall make our articles short that they may be the more generally read. We shall continue the discussion of it for some days. In the mean time, let all the provost marshals and all other military officers and all civil officers do their duty vigorously in ferreting out deserters and absenteeism without leave, and let every private citizen who is not a traitor give whatever information he possesses that will enable the officers to lay their hands upon the recalcitrants.

The last intelligence, dated the 30th inst., from the Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, says that the indications are that the enemy in front is very much weakened; that his force, relying upon the impossibility of any movement on our part under existing circumstances, has withdrawn. We have repeatedly expressed our belief in the strong probability of almost certain success in our campaign, and we are glad to see that our hopes are being open to us, but we see no evidence that they have been or are. Things look as if the Government didn't look.

The Confederate Government knows that Gen. Hooker's army cannot at present or for some time to come move upon Richmond, and that, if it were even to do so, a comparatively small force, under the command of such a general as Lee, would be able to destroy the capital would be likely to keep him and his troops at bay. Full three-fourths or four-fifths of Lee's late magnificent army might just as safely be spared as not to take the railroads and to reinforce the rebel armies in North Carolina, in Tennessee, and in Mississippi, adding at least twenty-five thousand to each of them and rendering all our former military operations, if not invincible, at least impracticable in the present condition of our troops. We have not a doubt that seventy-five thousand rebel troops could leave Richmond by railroad, have ample time to give strong blows at distant points, and get back again as soon as they would be wanted.

What we have a right to expect is that the Federal Government, with all its military and political resources, should be able to do something of this sort, but for the first time in the history of the war, it is not clear that it is doing so. It is not clear that it is doing so. It is not clear that it is doing so.

According to the strict law of blockade, no doubt the raising of a blockade either voluntarily or by superior force puts an end altogether to the blockade, so that it cannot be renewed without due notice anew, but due notice is not confined to any special form. It may be given actually to an individual neutral as well as constructively to the Government, or it may result from the notoriety of the fact of renewal. The notice, like the blockade itself, is a question of fact. If the blockade exists in fact, and the neutral knows it in fact, the blockade is legally renewed as if such neutral were either not a formal notice has been served or not, or that, for that matter, whether or not any notice has been actually served on himself. It is enough that the blockade exists and that he knows it. "It is immaterial," says Kent, "in what way the neutral comes to the knowledge of the blockade, if the blockade actually exists, it is bound not to violate it." The blockade, again, is of itself sufficient notice of it to vessels lying within the blockade port." The whole question is thus one of fact.

If, therefore, the blockade of Charleston was indeed raised by force the other day, of which we have no certain information, there can be no reasonable doubt that it was immediately renewed in fact, that it now exists, and that neutral vessels sailing toward Charleston will be duly notified of the renewal. In other words, there is every reason to believe that the blockade, if it was raised, has been lawfully established again. Undoubtedly a specific time must elapse in fact before a neutral can be considered as having been constructively notified of the renewal, but the fact of the blockade itself may be lawfully notified at once, or, if he lies within the port of Charleston, the bare notoriety of the renewal will constitute a lawful notice to him. The idea that a notice of sixty days forms the only lawful notice of the blockade is a "thought" whose "father" is "the wind" and whose mother is "the devil."

The principal disadvantages resulting to us from the affair would be the additional trouble and expense of serving actual notice on neutrals in the vicinity or elsewhere during the terms of the regular notice to their Governments. To these disadvantages should be added the embarrassing and delicate questions with foreign Governments which the suspension and renewal of the blockade might possibly occasion. All these disadvantages, however, could be easily overcome by decisive and statesmanlike treatment. If the blockade of Charleston was raised in reality, we can only hope that such treatment will be forthcoming.

We see an announcement of the marriage of Mr. Greenback. Now look

NOTES



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